



## HELP, I'M STUCK 2

### The Pit of Anxiety



#### PRINCIPLES FROM LAST WEEK

1. Jesus taught that there would be PITS along the JOURNEY.
2. God is really good at RESCUING people from PITS.
3. We need to learn the difference between MIRY CLAY and SOLID ROCK.

→ *Are you a worrier? Do you know a champion-worrier? What are their hallmarks? What are you worrying about right now? Have you trained yourself to worry?*  
 → *Worry is a joy-quencher, peace-stealer, strength-sapper, faith-stripper, health-wrecker, witness-destroyer + it's definitely a PIT. Discuss!*

#### A. WORRYING ABOUT WHAT YOU CANNOT CONTROL IS:

##### FUTILE, FOOLISH & DAMAGING (Matthew 6:25-33)

- i) FUTILE means POINTLESS: It gets you NOWHERE.
- ii) FOOLISH means DAFT: It just doesn't HELP.
- iii) DAMAGING means DANGEROUS, even DEADLY: It rarely leads to GOOD DECISIONS or POSITIVE OUTCOMES,

→ *Why does worry get you nowhere? Why doesn't worry help? How is it deadly?*

##### Some Cold Facts

- a) You do not KNOW the FUTURE.
- b) You cannot CONTROL the FUTURE.
- c) You do not KNOW EVERYTHING.
- d) You cannot CONTROL EVERYTHING.

→ *Are you a control freak? How do the four statements above make you feel? How important is it to accept that you can't control everything and that God is, in fact, sovereign? What does it mean to say that God is sovereign?*

What we KNOW, UNDERSTAND, OBSERVE & PERCEIVE is PARTIAL & INCOMPLETE (Proverbs 3:5-6, 1 Corinthians 13:12)

So, it becomes a choice: To walk on SOLID ROCK or scabble around in MIRY CLAY.

→ *What qualifies as 'miry clay?' What qualifies as 'solid rock?' Can you really choose between them?*

#### B. WHEN WORRY BECOMES A BAD HABIT, IT BECOMES A PIT

- \* Anxiety is INEVITABLE, because there are UNKNOWNS; the question becomes, WHAT do you DO WITH IT?
- \* When anxiety becomes a bad HABIT, your DEFAULT posture, your AUTOMATIC response, it becomes like a PRISON.

→ *Is anxiety 'inevitable?' How does it become a bad habit? Do you know anyone like that? Are you like that? How is it a prison?*

#### THE MECHANICS

- \* A SEED gets SOWN and then you RESPOND → You either REJECT or RECEIVE.
  - \* If you REJECT it before it does any DAMAGE, no HARM is done.
  - \* But what if you RECEIVE it? It enters the realm of your mind called your IMAGINATION and you start to PLAY with it.
- *How dangerous / powerful (for good + harm) is your imagination / fantasy. Do you have yours under control?*

#### THE DANGER: Over many years you develop an UNDISCIPLINED mind.

- \* i.e. There is no FILTER over your thoughts.
  - \* In time, you become very good at the things you PRACTISE.
  - \* It becomes a HABIT and then one day you wake up and you're in a PIT, STUCK!
- *What filters do you have over your thoughts? What are the characteristics of a disciplined v undisciplined mind?*

#### C. HOW DO YOU GET OUT? (Philippians 4:6-8)

1. CUT that train of thought DEAD in its track (Proverbs 4:23)

Helpful Questions:

- a) Do you recognise the SIGNS? b) Can you distinguish the VOICES?
- c) Do you feel the CONVICTION?

→ *What are the signs? What the voices? How does that conviction work?*

2. CAST (1 Peter 5:7, Psalm 55:22) ... A glorious INVITATION.

→ *What does that prayer look like? How often do you need to pray it? Do you?*

3. CORRECT (Phil 4:8, Isaiah 26:3) ... Remind yourself of the SOLID GROUND + go STAND on it! ... If you don't CORRECT it, you'll just FALL BACK IN.

→ *Are you good at cutting, casting and correcting? Where are you weakest? If you do that habitually, is it possible to get out the pit? Is it true that if you don't 'correct' you'll just fall back into the pit?*

#### D. HOW DO YOU STAY OUT?

- \* Build your house on the ROCK (Matthew 7:24-27).
- \* Keep reading, meditating + memorising the PROMISES until they SHOUT INFINITELY LOUDER than the enemy's lies + attacks.

→ *What steps have you successfully taken to make sure you're on solid ground? How practically have you gone about making sure the promises shout louder?*

#### THE PASTORAL BIT

1. In none of verses last week or this has there been any mention of blame or shame. This is NOT a message of condemnation or criticism, but of deep grace.  
 → *How did you feel listening to this message? Did it make you feel hopeful, a failure, frustrated or excited?*
2. Don't be ashamed to ask for HELP. The enemy is mean and you may have had to deal with long, difficult, complex circumstances to deal with.  
 → *Sometimes we need help to see the wood from the trees. Do you have or do you need a friend to stand with you, remind you what's true, who knows you well enough to shake you out of lies + able to point you to solid ground?*